

HOUSE BILL 2559

By Butt

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,  
relative to state institutions of higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year, a student enrolled in a state institution of higher education must pass a United States civics test, composed of questions from the one hundred (100) questions that are set forth within the civics test administered by the United States citizenship and immigration services to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens, to receive an associate or baccalaureate degree.

(b)

(1) The test required under subsection (a) shall be administered during the fall or spring semester of a student's first year of enrollment at the institution.

(2) If a student passes the test required under subsection (a) at one (1) state institution of higher education and later transfers or enrolls at another state institution of higher education, then the student shall receive credit for passing the test at the previous institution and has satisfied the requirements of this section.

(c) Each state institution of higher education shall prepare the test for its students that is composed of at least fifty (50) questions, selected at random, from the questions described in subsection (a). An institution may prepare multiple versions of the test for use in different classes and at different times.

(d) A student passes the test required in subsection (a) if the student correctly answers at least eighty percent (80%) of the questions administered. If a student fails to pass the test during the fall or spring semester of the student's first year of enrollment at the institution, then the institution shall require the student to enroll in an American civics course and to retake the test after completing the course.

(e) Each state institution of higher education shall ensure that an American civics course is offered by the institution each semester, and shall ensure that its American civics course is taught in a nonpartisan, unbiased manner that does not favor, prejudice, endorse, or promote a specific political party or platform, movement, social issue, interest, or cause over the opposing political party or platform, movement, social issue, interest, or cause.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to students enrolling at a state institution of higher education for the first time in the 2018-2019 academic year and in each academic year thereafter.